11. Local bodies should construct group houses with common services to cater to the very specific needs of the elderly of all categories.

12. Special attention should be paid to evolve programmes and policy incentives for the unorganised sectors and the society which are not covered by the regular pension and other retirement benefits.

13. Geriatric OPDs may be opened in hospitals and at least 5 per cent beds be reserved for them. Transit hospitals for the aged should also be set up in big cities.

CONDITION OF CHILDREN IN THE COUNTRY

3511. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to an article published in the observer of November 13, 1993 under the caption 'Freedom, rights and the child';

(b) whether it is a fact that India will have 144 million more children when it enters into the 21st century;

(c) whether it is a fact that about 60 million children in India live in absolute poverty; if so, what are the details in this regard;

(d) whether Government have examined the problems being faced by both, male and female children in the country;

(e) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(f) what is Goverment's policy about the welfare of children both unemployed and employed in factories and other establishments in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the estimate of the Standing Committee of Experts on Population Projections, child population upto the age of 14 years was 304 million in 1991. The projected figure for the year 2001 is 322 million.

(c) No such information is available. The basic unit for working out poverty-line is family.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) A series of situational studies and research works have been published by the Ministries dealing with child welfare and development. The Ministry of Welfare has sponsored and published 9 volumes on the problems of street children in India. The Ministry of Labour has published a series of books analysing the problems of child labour in important sectors and locations. The Department of Women and Child Development has sponsored research studies on various aspects of child development such as malnutrition, mental growth and behavioural development. In addition to these the Government receives regular feedback through constant monitoring and evaluation of schemes and projects.

(f) The policy of the Government with regard to such children is reflected in the National Policy document relating to Child Labour (1987) and in the National Policy for Children adopted by the Government of India in 1974. Recently, the Government of India has adopted a National Policy on Nutrition (1993) for the specially vulnerable groups including children below the poverty-line.

In addition to the National Policies, National Plan of Action for Children and National Plan of Action for the Girl Child have been prepared with National-level inter-ministerial committees to monitor the progress of implementation of the Plans.

In accordance with the Directive Principles of State Policy, laws such as the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 and the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986, have been enacted with an elaborate support of institutional network.

New schemes have been taken up under the Eighth Plan for the welfare of street and working children.

BEGGARS IN THE COUNTRY

3512. SHRI C. PRATHAPA REDDY :
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR :

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of beggers in the country;

(b) what is being done in the area of prevention of beggary;

(c) how many begger homes are there in the country; and

(d) what are the reasons for begger homes not coming up in recent years ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : (a) The exact number of beggars in the country is not known. However, according to the 1981 Census, among the marginal workers, there were 6,839 beggers and vagrants, etc. seeking work and 14,532 beggars and vagrants, etc., not seeking work. Further, among non-workers, there were 72,377 beggers and vagrants, etc., seeking work and 6,78,967 beggars and vagrants etc., not seeking work. The relevant figures of 1991 census have not been published so far.

(b) The problem of beggers is being tackled by State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. So far, 16 States and 2 Union Territory Administrations are implementing their special laws against beggary. The Government of India financially assists State Governments and Union Territory Administrations in setting up Work Centres in the Beggar Homes established or recognised by them under the Beggary Prevention Law.

With a view to providing care, treatment and rehabilitation of beggars residing in existing Beggar Homes, the Government of India has formulated and introduced a new Central Sector Scheme for Beggary Prevention during 1992-93. Under this Scheme grant-in-aid is provided for setting up Work Centres in Beggar Homes with appropriate facilities for technical education and vocational training on modern lines.

(c) As per the latest available figures, there are 118 institutions for Beggar Homes in the country.

(d) State Govenments and Union Territory Administrations have set up beggar homes in keeping with their specific requirements.

PROBLEM OF OLD PERSONS

3513. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the average to longivity if life in India has gone up, and as such the problem of old age people is swelling year by year;

(b) whether Government are aware of the fact that many old age parents are in lurch due to the western type of culture set in youngsters;

whether Government propose to propagate the Indian culture of joint family living;